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Staff, MSRC, "DODSON, Owen Vincent" (2015). *Manuscript Division Finding Aids*. 59.
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OWEN VINCENT DODSON PAPERS
Collection 27-1 to 27-10

Prepared & Revised by:
Greta S. Wilson
June 1980

MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

Scope Note

Owen Dodson presented this collection to Howard University between the years 1963-1968. It consists of scripts of certain of his plays, two novels, reviews and programs of his publications and productions, a small amount of personal correspondence, lectures and workshop materials, sheet music, poetry, periodicals containing Dodson's contributions, clippings, prints, photographs and two scrapbooks. Among the photographs, a large array of pictures of Lillian Evanti, (Lillian Evans Tibbs) coloratura soprano from Washington, D.C., are dominant. Many of these photographs were taken in elaborate costumes from some of her performances.

The collection contains approximately 1080 items and measures 5 linear feet including two individually wrapped scrapbooks. It spans the years 1930 to 1968.

Biographical Data

1914	Born in Brooklyn, New York, the son of Sarah Elizabeth Goode and Nathaniel Barnett Dodson
1932	Graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School, Brooklyn
1936	B.A. degree from Bates College, Lewiston, Maine; elected to Phi Beta Kappa
1938, 1939	Received fellowships from General Education Board
1938-1942	Directed drama at Atlanta University and Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia
1939	Master of Fine Arts, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
1940	Won Anderson Award for Verse Drama for his Garden of Time
1941	Won contest sponsored by the Committee on Interracial Cooperation, Atlanta, Georgia, for his Gargoyles in Florida
1942	Directed drama at Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA.
1942-43	Served in U.S. Navy (Seaman I/C) during which time he directed a morale building program and wrote several verse dramas
1944	Awarded Rosenwald Foundation Fellowship
1946	His Powerful Long Ladder, a book of poems was published
1947	Appointed Associate Professor of the Department of Drama, College of Fine Arts, Howard University
1949	Under the auspices of the Department of State toured Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Germany with his Howard University Players
1951	<i>His Boy at the Window</i> , a novel, was published
1953	Awarded Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship "for creative activity in the field of fiction."
1955	Won prize in international short story contest sponsored by Paris Revue for The Summer Fire
1960	Promoted to full Professor, Department of Drama, College of Fine Arts, Howard University

Biographical Data

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|------|--|
| 1963 | Toured the United States with his Howard University Players |
| 1964 | Named member of National Committee of the Shakespeare Anniversary Committee
plan the American celebration of the Shakespeare Quadricentennial |
| 1967 | Received Doctor of Letters degree from Bates College |

Mr. Dodson's plays have been performed by theatre groups throughout this country and in England. His poems, plays and fiction have been translated into French, Polish, Italian, Japanese and Norwegian.

Series Description

Series A Personal Papers

Box 27-1 Awards, certificates, diplomas, clippings, legal documents, programs, announcements and invitations surrounding his academic and professional career

Series B Correspondence

Box 27-1 Letters, telegrams, greeting and post cards

Series C Manuscripts

Box 27-2 Includes scripts, cast list, notes, property lists, sheet music, two novels "A Bent
to Box 27-3 House" and "Boy and the Window", poems and plays written by Dodson

Series D Programs and Reviews of Production

Box 27-4 Newspaper reviews, posters, flyers, programs relating to theatrical productions mostly directed by Dodson; some performed by the Howard Players and others. Includes reviews by Dodson.

Series E Teaching Materials

Box 27-5 Notes and outlines from a production seminar and manuscripts from a play writing class.

Series F Programs

Box 27-5 Programs of Charter Day exercises, Howard University commencement exercises, church services, recitals, operas, and plays

Series G Publications

Box 27-5 Includes periodicals containing articles contributed by Dodson; and descriptions of two anthologies; American Negro Poetry and Soon, One Morning which contains contributions by Dodson

Series Howard Players

Box 27-6 Background of the Howard Players, Howard University and the Drama Department plus review of plays performed by the Players

Series Description continued

Series I Howard University

Box 27-6 Annual report of the Summer School, 1951

Series J Theatre Workshops

Box 27-6 Clippings, programs, reviews, proceedings invitations to productions of the following workshops: New York State Theatre Festival, Alabama, A & M College Writers Conference, Atlanta University Summer School of the Theatre, Hampton Institute Summer Theatre Arts Festival

Series K Prints and Photographs

Box 27-7 Includes several photographs of Dodson. There are a large number of photos of Miss
to Box 27-8 Lillian Evanti (Lillian Evans Tibbs), soprano from Washington, D.C., many of which are of her in ornate costumes from some of her performances. There are also numerous prints of scenes from famous plays and operas.

Series L Scrapbooks

Item 27-9 The first Scrapbook contains clippings of the cartoon series "Dark Laughter" and
to Item 27-10 "Lighter Side" by Ol Harrington: the second one contains clippings surrounding his professional career as director and author.

Container List

Series A	Personal Papers
	Academic
Box	Folder
27-1	1 Bates College
	2 High School Diploma and Completion of study, 1929, 1932
	3 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation
	Awards
	4 Awards
	Clippings
	5 Biographical materials - clipping
	6 Clippings - miscellaneous
	7 Jefferson City Post Tribune
	Documents
	8 Agreement: Farrar, Straus and Co. and Owen Dodson
	9 Appointment as Apprentice Petty Officer, U.S. Navy
	10 Certification of Registration of a Claim to Copyright in a Dramatic or a Dramatic Musical Composition
	Organizational Affiliations
	11 Harold Jackson Memorial Committee - clippings and snapshots
	12 Phi Beta Kappa, Gamma Chapter
	13 Shakespeare Anniversary Committee - clippings
	14 Shakespeare Anniversary Committee - correspondence
	15 Thomas Jefferson High School Alumni Association - Alumni Reunion Programs
	Printed Materials
	16 Announcements

- 17 Contest Programs
- 18 Invitations
- 19 Ship passenger lists
- 20 Published materials

B Correspondence

Letters

- Box 27-1 Folder 21 Correspondence - A-B
 22 Correspondence - C-F
 23 Correspondence - G-H
 24 Correspondence - J-N
 25 Correspondence - P-S
 26 Correspondence - V-N
 27 Correspondence - no name
 and/or date
 28 Other Correspondents

Cards

- 29 Greeting cards
30 Post cards

Telegrams

- 31 Telegrams

C Manuscripts

Box 27-2

Music

- 32 "Naturama" by Evanti, Lillian
33 "Til Victory is Won" - Cast
List, property list, etc.
34 "Til Victory is Won" -
miscellaneous, notes,
memos, etc.
35 "Til Victory is Won" - script

Music Scores

- 36 "Everybody Join Hands"
37 "He's Hitched Our Wagon to a
Star"
38 "My Lord's Treasury"
39 "Sleep, Darling Sleep"
40 "We Will follow all the Way"
41 "When we were Lost"
42 Untitled scores

Novels

- 43 A Bent House

44 Boy at the Window

Poems

45 "Asking"

46 "Autumn"

47 "Black Mother Praying"

C Manuscripts (cont'd)

Poems

Box 27-2	Folder	48 Black mother -Praying in the summer, 1943
	49	"Centaur's are half Animal, half men"
	50	"The Confession Stone"
	51	"The Decision"
	52	"Finally, Lady, You Were Gone From Us"
	53	"Guita"
	54	"Ira Aldridge, 1807-1867" draft
	55	"Jonathan's Song"
	56	"Metaphor for a Negro Woman"
	57	"Poems for Kenneth"
	58	"The Precedent"
	59	"Righteousness"
	60	"Sickle Pears"
	61	"Someday We're Gonna Tear The Pillars Down"
	62	"Summing Up by the Defendant"
	63	"Tell Rachael, He Whispered"
	64	"This is a Prayer"
	65	"Those Seven Sisters"
	66	"Trilogy Earle Hyman"
	67	"The Widows Walk"
	68	"For J.M."
	69	"Doomsday Chorus"
	70	"I Will Tremble Once and Be Forgotten Forever"
	71	"Winter Death"
	72	"All for fun of the World Well Gained"
	73	"Venus and Mars"
	74	"Troy is a lost City"
	75	"The Dawn Risers"
	76	"Slave Who Died Coming Here"
	77	"On Her Birthday"
	78	"Epithalamion"
	79	"France 1942"
	80	"Dante, 1942"
	81	"The Failure"
	82	"Seventy-five Years Is A Long Stretch of Land"

83 "Generation of Vipers"

84 "Returning Veteran"

C Manuscripts (cont'd)

- Poems
- Box 27-3 Folder 85 "Cradle Song"
- 86 "To the Intolerant"
- 87 Christmas Poems
- 88 Untitled Poems
- Short Stories
- 89 "Come Home Early, Chile"
- 90 "The Sea Shell"
- Miscellaneous
- 91 "Bury Me Over My Father"
- 92 Notes for a Ballard
- Plays
- 93 "Amistad"
- 94 "Bayou Legend" - Script
- 95 "Bayou Legend - Script -
Copyrighted, 1946
- 96 "Bayou Legend - Script -
presented by the Theatre
Workshops of Hunter College
May 13-21, 1950
- 97 "Where You From?" A
manuscript of the play

D Programs and Reviews of
Production

- Box 27-4 98 "Antigone"
- 99 "Aria da Cappello"
- 100 "The Bad Seed"

- 101 "The Amen Corner", James
Baldwin
- 102 "Bayou Legend"
- 103 "Beyond the Blues"
- 104 "Boy at the Window"
- 105 "The Cave Dwellers"
- 106 "The Cherry Orchard"

- 107 "A Christmas Miracle" -
clippings
- 108 "A Christmas Miracle -
programs
- 109 "The Confession Stone"
- 110 "Constellation of Women"
- 111 "Death of a Salesman"
- 112 "Defiant Island"
- 113 "Divine Comedy"
- 114 "A Dream Come True in White
and Blue"

D Programs and Reviews of
Production

Box 27-4	Folder	115 "Eaters of Dust"
	116	"Emperor Jones"
	117	"Freedom the Banner"
	118	"Garden of Time"
	119	"Guest in the House"
	120	"Hamlet"
	121	"Look Back in Anger"
	122	"Macbeth"
	123	"Mambas Daughter"
	124	"Media"
	125	"A Moon for the Misbegotten"
	126	"Morning, Noon, and Night"
	127	"My Hearts in the Highlands"
	128	"New World a Coming"
	129	"Noah"
	130	"Nude With Violin"
	131	"Oedipus Rex"
	132	"Pelleas and Melisande"
	133	"Powerful Long Ladder"
	134	"Purlie Victorious"
	135	"Pygamalion"
	136	"Rashomon"
	137	"The Reluctant Debutante"
	138	"The Return"
	139	"Simply Heavenly"
	140	"The Summer Fire"
	141	"Suppressed Desires"
	142	"Tea and Sympathy"
	143	"Thunder Rock"
	144	"Til Victory is Won" - News Release
	145	"Twilight Crane" and "Home"
	146	Reviews by Owen Dodson

E Teaching Materials

Box 27-5

147 Production Seminar

148 Playwriting Class Manuscripts

F Programs

149 Programs - miscellaneous

G Publications Periodicals
Containing Dodson's
Contributions

- Box 27-5 Folder 150 The Arts Quarterly, June,
1939
151 Bravo/Carnegie Hall, 1968
152 Cavalcade, November, 1941
153 The Christian Century,
Jan. 7, 1942
154 Common Ground
155 The Garnet, 1934-1936
156 New Currents, Aug., 1974
157 Opportunity, Journal of Negro
Life, 1935-37
158 Right Angle, 1948
159 Tomorrow, 1945
160 Trend, March 1942
161 Voices, Winter, 1950
162 The Yale Literary Magazine,
1937-1938

Anthologies

- 163 Anthologies- Contributions

Miscellaneous

- 164 Miscellaneous publications

H Howard Players

- Box 27-6 165 The Howard Players and the
Drama Department
166 Howard University Players
Reviews

I Howard University

167 Howard University Annual
Report of the Summer
School, 1951

J Theatre Workshops

168 Alabama A & M College
Writer's Conference
169 Atlanta University Summer
School of the Theatre
170 Hampton Institute Summer
Theatre Arts Festival
171 New York State Theatre
Festival

K Prints and Photographs

Box 27-7 Owen Dodson
Folder 172-176

Owen Dodson and Others
172-179

Lillian Evanti
180-211

Box 27-8 Lillian Evanti and Others
212-226

Photographs Individual -
Identified
227-241

Photographs Individual - Unidentified
242-243

Photographs - Group-- Identified
244-246

Photographs of Things
247-252

Prints
253-268

L Scrapbooks

Item 27-9 Scrapbook No. 1

Item 27-10 Scrapbook No. 2 (FRAGILE)

